

Testimony Before the House Armed Services Committee  
The Honorable Paula A. DeSutter  
Assistant Secretary of State  
Bureau of Verification and Compliance  
March 4, 2003

Mr. Chairman, it is an honor to appear here today to discuss Cooperative Threat Reduction and the responsibilities of my bureau, the Bureau of Verification and Compliance. The CTR effort and the work of verification are complementary. Programs initiated and funded through CTR are intended to secure weapons of mass destruction (WMD) sites throughout Russia, fund destruction of weapons of mass destruction, and prevent the transfer of weapons, dangerous materials, and technologies to terrorists and terrorist sponsor states. The job of verification is to assess whether a particular nation has met its obligations and commitments and to seek to reinforce efforts to bring noncompliant parties back into full compliance with their obligations.

I would like to note at the outset that we have had excellent cooperation with Senator Lugar, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and his staff, on compliance issues related to CTR, particularly on Russian compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention. I would also note that the President's granting of a waiver this January for continuing CTR funding reinforces the fact that there is still much to be accomplished. As we look to the future, I believe we should ensure that the funding provided for securing sites and destroying WMD material should also increase our certainty that the most serious threat has been lessened and the purpose achieved.

As the Assistant Secretary for Verification and Compliance, I have the lead responsibility for tracking, determining, and reporting on areas of noncompliance. My bureau also prepares the President's Annual Report on Adherence to and Noncompliance with Arms Control and Nonproliferation Agreements and Commitments. My comments are drawn from my knowledge of that report and others that the Verification and Compliance Bureau has coordinated. I'll also address

the emphasis and need for greater transparency as we prepare to ratify the Moscow Treaty. I am particularly concerned about Russian compliance, access to the most sensitive sites -- whether biological, chemical, or nuclear -- and providing for improvements in transparency.

That the Soviet Union violated its arms control obligations is beyond dispute. What is important now is that we gain adequate information to give confidence that those who inherited the Soviet WMD programs are committed to their security and elimination. While access could confirm our assessments of past noncompliance, it is also a necessary element in the path back into compliance. I'll offer several examples.

#### **Russian Noncompliance with the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention**

- We believe, based on available evidence, that Russia continues to maintain an offensive biological weapons program in violation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC).

We believe that the Russian Federation has not divulged the full extent of their chemical agent and weapon inventory, and that the declaration is incomplete with respect to chemical weapons production, development facilities and chemical agent and weapons stockpiles. Such activities are inconsistent with the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

As this Committee knows, the Soviet Union had an offensive biological weapons program in violation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. The Soviet program was the world's largest and consisted of both military facilities and civilian research and development institutes.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, over 60,000 people were involved in the research, development, and production of biological weapons in the Soviet Union. The annual production capacity was several thousand tons of various agents. In 1992, the Russian government publicly acknowledged the Soviet program and committed to ending the former Soviet biological weapons program. We knew the program was massive and that it would be no easy matter for

Russia to terminate the offensive program. Our noncompliance findings in the early 1990's reflected this. However, starting perhaps with Russia's 1992 declaration, provided under confidence building measures it agreed to as part of the BWC Review Conference, there were problems. Their 1992 Declaration was incomplete and misleading. In an effort to resolve our concerns, a U.S., UK, Russia "Trilateral Process" was initiated in 1992. As outlined in the Joint Statement, it called for a series of confidence-building visits and information exchanges designed to demonstrate progress toward achieving openness. However, this process did not resolve all U.S. concerns and broke down in the mid-1990's. While there has been downsizing and restructuring of the biological weapons program, and research and production facilities have seen severe cuts in funding and personnel, some key components of the former Soviet program may remain largely intact. Of particular concern is the possibility that some facilities, in addition to being engaged in legitimate activity, may be maintaining the capability to produce biological weapons agents.

Previous assessments of Russian compliance have highlighted the dichotomy between what appears to be the commitment of key members of the Russian leadership to resolve BWC compliance issues and the continued involvement of "old hands" in BWC Protocol negotiations and in what Russia describes as its defensive biological weapons program. We appreciate expressions of commitment. However, what we need is for these expressions to be translated into practice.

A report prepared in support of a CTR waiver in December, 2002, also notes "There continues to be a profound lack of openness about the offensive BW program inherited from the Soviet Union . . . The 1992 declaration also failed to list all of the sites that supported the Soviet offensive BW program and that retain at least some of their offensive capability." The same report outlines progress made in terms of cooperation-related visits to several key Soviet-era civilian BW production facilities in Russia, but observed "Russia continues, however, to deny Western access to certain biological facilities, including those believed to have been associated with the Soviet offensive BW program."

There is no disagreement about the nature of the program or what is required to address the problem. We need greater

access -- not only to the biological weapons sites -- but to chemical weapons activities as well.

### **Focus on Noncompliance with the CWC**

In becoming a State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention, Russia accepted legal obligations to destroy its chemical weapons stockpile and to forego the development or possession of chemical weapons. This includes the chemical weapons stockpile and program remaining in Russia at the breakup of the USSR. In recent years, the Russian Federation has taken steps to strengthen its chemical weapons destruction program, including consolidating responsibility under civilian leadership and significantly increasing funding. Progress has been slow and Russia has had to request extensions on its chemical weapons destruction deadlines from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). With international assistance, Russia, in mid-December 2002, started destroying its Category 1 blister agent stockpile. However, we remain concerned that Russia may not have fully declared its chemical weapons stockpiles and facilities. In addition, Russia may maintain chemical weapons production mobilization capabilities. For example, Moscow television commentary related to a July 1998 OPCW inspection of the Khimprom Chemical Weapons Production Facility (CWPF) in Novocheboksarsk noted that, "in line with safety regulations, the so-called mobilization capacities are being maintained. This is costing Khimprom vast sums of money even though this is a matter for the federal government." Clearly, any offensive chemical weapons program is a violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

### **Ending Russia's Offensive CW Activities**

The United States continues to work closely with Russia in an attempt to resolve our concerns with Russia's CWC declaration. We have an intense dialogue on these issues, even if we have yet to achieve satisfaction on our concerns. On several occasions, Secretary Powell, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Bolton, and other senior U.S. officials have stressed the importance of resolving these concerns, particularly related to Russia's CW stockpile, with senior Russian officials, including the Chairman of the State Commission on Chemical Disarmament.

The United States and the Russian Federation also hold periodic bilateral meetings at the expert level, with political oversight. The last experts' meeting on declaration issues was held in February 2002. The primary topic of discussion during that meeting entailed our concerns with the Russian chemical weapons stockpile. In response to official U.S. questions about Russia's stockpile declaration, Russia provided some additional information and a proposal for U.S. experts to review documentation related to its declared CW stockpile. Consequently, a team of experts visited Moscow in early December 2002 to conduct the documentation review. However, the Russian Federation only offered for review documents already available to the United States through the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The United States also proposed to Russia that U.S. experts conduct site visits as part of our plan to resolve concerns related to the Russian chemical weapons stockpile. The U.S. proposal requests a series of short-notice visits, with unimpeded access, to undeclared suspect Russian chemical weapons sites. The United States also provided detailed procedures governing how such visits would be conducted and made clear that such visits were not reciprocal. To date Russia has only agreed to site visits at declared chemical weapons storage and destruction facilities. The United States has made clear our concern is not with declared facilities, but with sites that were not declared under the CWC. Consultations are continuing on this U.S. proposal. A letter from Senator Lugar to Foreign Minister Ivanov reinforced our concerns. We explained the situation to Senator Lugar's staff and, as a result, the Senator raised this issue on several occasions with Foreign Minister Ivanov. I raise this as an example of how we can work together to use the CTR program, the reports, and the waiver process to try to bring Russia into compliance.

Russia is continuing to revise its previous plan for destroying its stockpile of nerve agents. On July 5, 2001, the Russian government approved the revised chemical weapons destruction plan (Resolution No. 510) that amends the initial Russian plan of March 21, 1996, (Resolution No. 305). Russia has provided the United States and the OPCW numerous details on the planned destruction of its nerve agent stocks. However, the United States is continuing to

seek additional clarification as the Russian plan continues to evolve.

Gaining access to sites of concern is not only critical for programs that have been identified, it underscores the need for transparency that will define our relationship with Russia in the future.

We have over the past two years seen surprising cooperation between the United States and Russia, as Presidents Bush and Putin have defined a new course forward for our bilateral relationship. One striking example of this is our ongoing cooperation in the global war on terrorism, which includes, among other things, significantly increased exchanges of intelligence. We hope to bring this kind of cooperation and transparency to address our BWC and CWC concerns as we further develop our relations with Russia.

### **The Moscow Treaty**

Another example of cooperation between the United States and Russia is the Treaty of Moscow, signed by the two Presidents last May, which provides for significant reductions in strategic offensive forces. The Moscow Treaty recognizes a new strategic relationship between the United States and Russia based on the understanding that the principles, which will underpin our relationship, are mutual security, openness, cooperation, and predictability. This understanding played an important role in our judgments regarding verification

As was discussed with the Senate in support of Moscow Treaty ratification, the United States will gain transparency into the disposition of Russia's strategic nuclear warheads and the overall status of reductions in its strategic forces through our own intelligence resources, bilateral assistance programs, including CTR, the START Treaty, and the work of the Consultative Group for Strategic Security (CGSS) and the Moscow Treaty's Bilateral Implementation Commission. We expect Russia to gain transparency in much the same way.

Information obtained through START's verification regime, including its data exchanges and short-notice on-site inspections, and U.S. national intelligence resources will continue over the course of the decade to add to our body

of knowledge regarding the disposition of Russia's strategic nuclear warheads and the overall status of reductions in Russia's strategic nuclear forces. Moreover the ongoing U.S. programs to assist Russia in eliminating its strategic offensive arms and enhancing the safety and security of nuclear warheads in Russia will provide additional transparency into Russia's reduction efforts.

We also recognize that more contacts and exchanges of information could be useful. The CGSS met in September 2002 and the Working Groups have been meeting as well. The Bilateral Implementation Commission will meet once the Treaty enters into force.

It is possible that the Russian Federation may need additional nonproliferation and threat reduction assistance as it reduces its strategic nuclear warheads under the Moscow Treaty. As these discussions develop, we intend to continue to work with Russia, under the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program. We hope that the U.S. assistance programs remain as robust as they have in the past, since they have the opportunity to contribute both to threat reduction (safety and security), as well as to our body of knowledge, as we implement treaties.

## **Conclusion**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the invitation to speak today. I believe that the Cooperative Threat Reduction programs can contribute to verification of arms control and proliferation agreements and commitments. These programs are another means to bring Russia into compliance with their obligations and commitments. Much has been done, but as the President has made clear in his decision not to certify Russian commitment to compliance, much remains to be done.

The Executive Branch's efforts to accomplish these goals are multiplied by active support of the Legislative Branch in these endeavors.

So Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I thank you for your interest and for inviting me to discuss the verification and compliance perspective on the CTR programs.